

comparator means for comparing the first control data with second control data included in [the] a next header data of [said predetermined layer subsequent to the identification data] another picture; and

[encoding] means for [transmitting neither the identification data nor the second control data when the first control data and the second control data are the same, and for transmitting both the identification data and the second control data] changing the P picture encoding condition and for encoding an input signal to a P picture according to an output signal of said comparator means, when the first control data and the second control data are different from each other.

2. (Twice Amended) The picture encoding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein [said predetermined layer is one of a video sequence layer,] a group of pictures layer[, a picture layer [and a slice layer] includes said P picture.

3. (Twice Amended) A picture decoding apparatus for decoding an encoded P picture signal [of a layer structure composed of a plurality of layers], comprising:

memory means for storing control data included in header data of [a predetermined layer] a P picture [and subsequent to identification data]; and

decoding means for decoding [the] a succeeding encoded P picture signal by using, when a next header data of [said predetermined layer] said succeeding encoded P picture does not contain control data, [a preceding] the control data stored in said memory means.

Please cancel claim 4 without prejudice.

5. (Twice Amended) The picture decoding apparatus according to claim 3, wherein [said predetermined layer is one of a video sequence layer,] a group of pictures layer[, a picture layer and a slice layer] includes said P picture.

6. (Twice Amended) A picture recording medium having an encoded P picture signal [of a layer structure composed of a plurality of layers of different types], comprising:

a first encoded P picture signal of a predetermined layer including [identification data and] control data [subsequent thereto]; and

a second encoded P picture signal [of a layer of a same type as said predetermined layer and] following said first encoded picture signal, wherein said second encoded P picture signal omits [the identification data and] the control data.

7. (Twice Amended) The picture recording medium according to claim 6, wherein [said predetermined layer is one of a video sequence layer,] a group of pictures layer[, a picture layer and a slice layer] includes said P picture.

8. (Twice Amended) A picture encoding method for forming an encoded P picture signal [of a layer structure composed of a plurality of layers], comprising the steps of:

comparing first control data, which is included in header data of a [predetermined layer subsequent to identification data] P picture, with second control data included in a next header data of [said predetermined layer subsequent to the identification data] another picture; and

encoding the [identification data and the]remarks second control data only when the first control data and the second control data are different from each other.

9. (Twice Amended) The picture encoding method according to claim 8, wherein [said predetermined layer is one of a video sequence layer,] a group of [picture] pictures layer[, a picture layer and a slice layer] includes said P picture.

10. (Twice Amended) A picture decoding method for decoding an encoded P picture signal [of a layer structure composed of a plurality of layers of different types], comprising the steps of:

storing a first control data included in header data of a P picture [predetermined layer subsequent to identification data]; and

decoding [the] a succeeding encoded P picture signal by using the stored first control data when a control data does not exist in a next header data of [a layer of a same type as said predetermined layer] said succeeding encoded P picture .

Please cancel claim 11 without prejudice.

12. (Twice Amended) The picture decoding method according to claim 10, wherein [said predetermined layer is one of a video sequence layer,] a group of pictures layer[, a picture layer and a slice layer] includes said P picture.

13. (Twice Amended) A picture signal transmission method for transmitting encoded P picture data [of a layer structure composed of a plurality of layers of different types], comprising the steps of:

transmitting a first encoded P picture signal [of a predetermined layer which includes identification data thereof] and control data thereof[, the control data subsequent to the identification data]; and

transmitting a second encoded P picture signal [of a layer of a same type as said predetermined layer] and including [none of an identification data of the second encoded picture signal and] none of a control data of the second encoded picture signal when control data of the first